

# Shri Vallabhacharya and His Teachings

ORIGINALLY WRITTEN IN GUJARATI BY  
Dr. CHIMAN LAL M. VAIDYA



TRANSLATED IN ENGLISH BY  
BHAILABHAI N. SHASTRI

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## THE BOOK

An authentic and useful book on the life and teachings of Sri Vallabhacharya, founder of the Puṣṭimārga in Vaishnavism. The work is from the pen of a great scholar who belonged to faith and had a direct contact with all the sectrain and traditional learning of the Samoradaya.

Though very small in bulk, the work gives sufficient insight into the subject and hence is immensely useful to the students of Indian philosophy and religion.

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**SHRI VALLABHACHARYA**  
AND  
**HIS TEACHINGS**

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*Originally written in Gujarati*

*by*

Dr. Chimanlal M. Vaidya.

*and*

*Translated in English.*

*by*

Shri Bhailalbhai N. Shastri.

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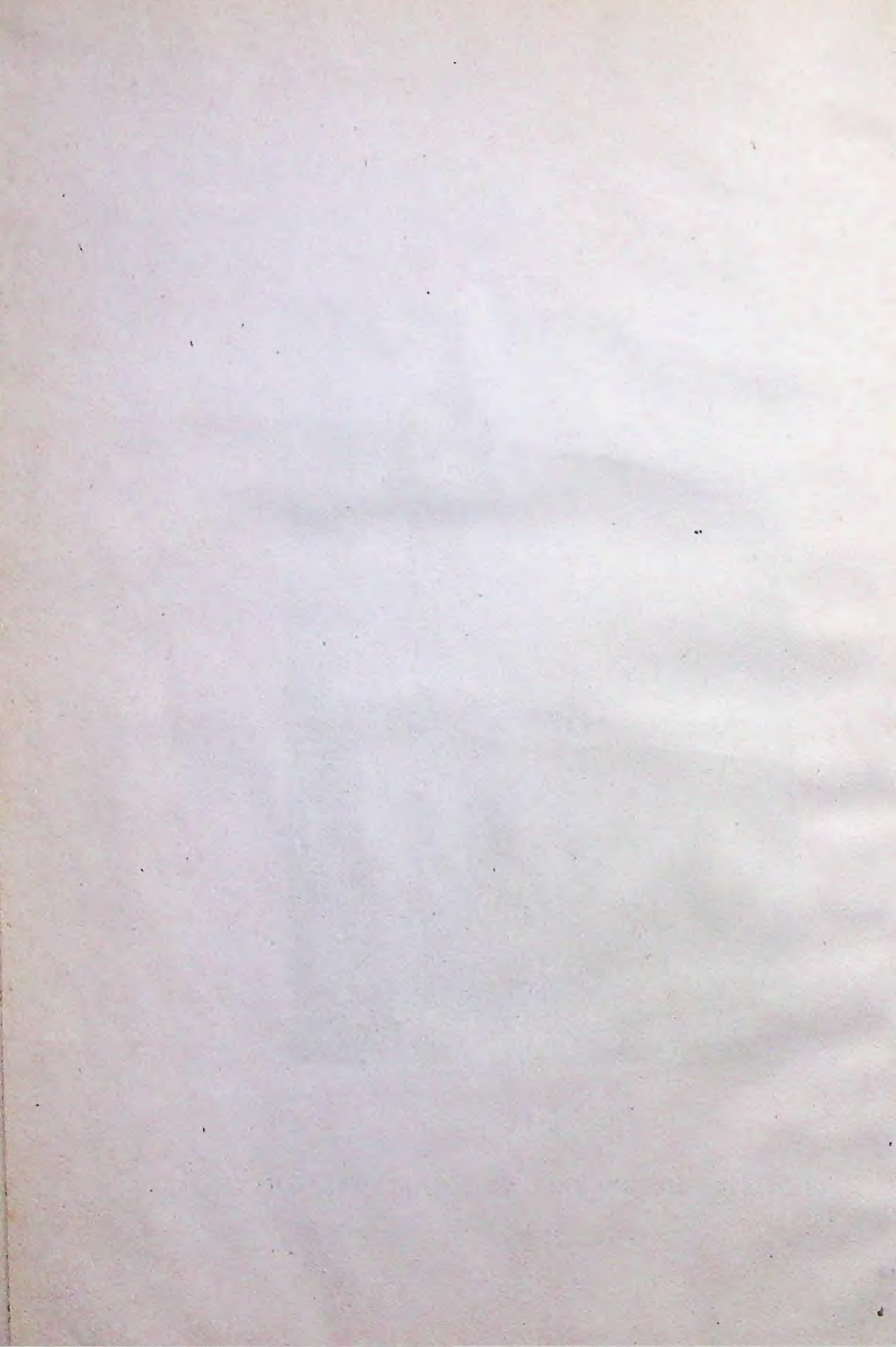
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MAHAPRABHU SRIMAD VALLABHACHARYAJI





# FOREWARD

(By Dr. Manjula R. Majmudar, M. A. LL. B; Ph. D.)

The abstract philosophical speculations of Sankaracharya (A. D. 788-820) could not make much appeal to the masses, who found sufficient spiritual food in the **Bhakti** (devotion) schools of Ramanuja, Nimbarka, Madhva and Vallabha.

Vallabhacharya (A. D. 1473-1531), a Tail-anga Brahmana of South India was born in a family with leanings towards Vedic rituals and the worship of Gopala krishna. He made more than one extensive tour in India, and came in contact with leaders of other religious schools. He won the title of an **Acharya** (teacher) in the court of Vijayanagara; and found a good following in all communities. He spent most of his life in places like Banaras and Adel (about two miles from Allahabad), where he carried on his literary and religious activities.

Vallabhacharya has tried to show that the basic sacred texts, such as the **Upanisads**, the **Gita**, and the **Brahmasutras** teach beyond doubt the doctrine of Advaita (non-dualism), pure and simple, without any reference to what is called Maya by S'ankara. The Advaita of the Upanisads is thus **S'uddha** (Pure) unalloyed with

Maya, both the cause and effect being one. Accordingly, Vallabha's system is called **Suddhadvaita** (pure non-dualism). As the system, again, strongly emphasizes **Pusti** (divine grace) as the most powerful and unfailing means of enjoying the highest bliss, it is also known from the religious point of view as **Pustimarga** ( the Path of Divine Grace ).

Vallabhacharya added the **Bhagavata** as a basic work of authority to the **Prasthanatrayi** of the **Vedas**, the **Gita** and the **Brahmsutras**. He has shown that the **Bhagavata** explains and develops all the points of the **Brahmsutras** and is a running commentary on the Gita. The **Bhagavata**, which is a record of all the experiences of Vyasa in meditation, is therefore, otherwise known as **Samadhi-bhasa** ( the language of meditation ).

Vallabhacharya has, written, besides many things, sixteen small treatises called **Sodasa-granthas** which are helpful in understanding his system of Bhakti. His school has helped to produce a rich literature on **Bala Krishna Bhakti**, not only in Sanskrit, but also in Hindi, Vraja and Gujarati languages.

The divine bliss of Bhakti is considered by Vallabha to be purely a gift of the Lord, and



cannot be obtained by any human effort. It is this idea of the gift of divine grace that is called **Pusti**.

One thing that distinguished Vallabha from other Acharyas was the fact that Vallabha preached **bhakti** to be practised at home while doing one's normal jobs, and not going in for renouncement of the world. He himself was a **grihastha acharya** who, while remaining in this world, was not of it, like the lotus in water. This view about the relation between the world and the Lord, drew many devotees to his fold, which comprised men and women drawn from different castes and walks of life.

Such was Vallabha, a source of inspiration and solace to the groaning world full of hypocrisy and atheism, in the 15th century.

This brochure originally written in Gujarati by Dr. Chimanlal M. Vaidya and rendered into chaste English by Shri B. N. Shastri deserves wide publicity.

It will acquaint many kindred souls with the gospel of Bhakti sought for in the present world, which is anything but godly and god-fearing.

Vasanta Panchami  
Samvat. 2015

**Chaitanydham**  
Pratapganj  
**Baroda 2.**



## *PREFACE*

It is known to all that Shuddhadwaita Samsad has been publishing authentic literature on Pushtimarga since its inception. The main purpose is to popularize the noble and lofty teachings of Shri Vallabhacharyaji among the followers of Pushtimarga and the modern educated youths and intelligentsia of our land.

In keeping with this objective, the Samsad first undertook the work of translating the famous books in English on Sampradaya Viz. (1) Doctrines of Vallabhacharya, (2) Vallabha and (3) Life and Teachings of Shri Vallabhacharyaji. Late Shri Mohanlal V. Gandhi B. A., LL. B. who was one of the organizers of Shuddhadwait Samsad translated all the above books in Gujarati. Shuddhadwaita Samsad could not at that time, publish independent books in English for various reasons, though Shri M. V. Gandhi had prepared in manuscript form the Life of Shri Vallabha, The Sayings of Shri Gokulnathji and select passages from Subodhiniji in English.

Anugraha (a monthly periodical) has started an English section from March, 1959. Now Samsad has decided to publish independent books in English on the different aspects of Pushtimarga and the present work is the first in the series. The second book in the series, called "Doctri-

ness of Vallabhacharya" is written by a German Scholar Prof. Glasenapp of Königsberg Germany and will be shortly out of the press.

The foreward of the present book is written by a well-known Gujarati scholar, Shri Manjulal R. Mazmudar, while the second book in the series is prefaced by Prof. Govindlal H. Bhatt. Both are eminent scholars in their respective field and they need no introduction. Here we take the opportunity of conveying our heart felt thanks to them for favouring us with their introductory notes.

The present book 'Shri Vallabhacharyaji and His Teachings' is originally written in Gujarati by Dr. Chimanlal M. Vaidya, the editor of Anugraha and the Secretary of the Shuddhadwaita Samsad. The book is highly spoken of by the literary persons of Gujarata. The English version of the Gujarati book has been carefully prepared by Shri Bhailalbhai N. Shastri, M. A., B. ED. who is a well-known sampradayika scholar. Shri Shastriji weilds a facile pen in English and we earnestly hope that this brochure will be appreciated by the readers.

We heartily thank Shri Ramanlal Girdharlal Desai for defraying the cost of the publication of this booklet in memory of his revered father Shri Girdharlal Dosabhai Desai. Late Shri Girdharlal Desai was born in Samvat 1931 at Visn.

agar and belonged to Visanagar Bania Community. He was B. A., LL. B and began practising at Baroda in Samvat 1957. Soon he became a leading member of the Bar by dint of his penetrating genius and legal acumen. He was appointed as State Pleader by the late Maharaja Shri Sayaji Rao Gaekwar of Baroda and worked from Sam. 1972 to 2001 in that capacity. By virtue of his post he was also a member of the State Legislative Council. In appreciation of his valuable services to the People and the State he was conferred the title of 'Raja-Ratna' by the Maharaja Sayaji Rao who often sought legal advice from him on important state matters.

He is survived by two sons and a daughter. of them Shri Ramanbhai is B. A., LL. B and has a flourishing practice. He has a good knowledge of Sampradayika literature. His second son Shri Shantibhai is a science graduate (B. Sc). The whole family is highly cultured, noble and famous for their munificence. They have donated more than five lacs of rupees from 'Raja-Ratna Shri Girdharbhai Trust Fund towards the establishment of a big hospital at Visnagar. From the same Trust a homeopathic dispensary has been run at Baroda.

Again we offer our sincere thanks to Shri Ramanbhai for bearing the entire cost of publication of this book.

***Dr. Chhimanlal M. Valdya***

Honorary Secretary,  
Shri Suddhadwaita Samsad, Kapadwanj.



# SHRI VALLABHACHARYA AND HIS TEACHINGS.

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## CHAPTER I

### *Family and Parents.*

Shri Vallabhacharya, a great Hindu Acharya of Vaishnava cult, was born in the sixteenth century. He was born at a time when Hindu religion and culture were in danger of being destroyed by the fanatic Mahomedans. The birth of Shri Vallabhacharyaji heralded a new era in the history of Hindu religion. He saved Hindu religion from the savage attacks of Muslim rulers. He breathed new life into the people of India who had lost all hope of redemption under the rule of sword and terror.

South India is the birth place of almost all the Acharyas of Hindu thought like Shankara, Ramanuja, Nimbark and Madhva, Shri Vallabha-

charya also was born at Kankarkumbh in Andhra. He was a Vellanatiya Brahmin. His gotra was Bharadwaja. The name of the original ancestor of his family was Yagnanarayana Bhatt. He had a wife named Sudharma. The family of Yagnanarayana Bhatt was famous for piety, religious fervour, charity and devotion to Krishna. The needy and the poor received help from them in various ways. The Gujarati poet-saint Vallabhadas vividly brings out the saintly qualities and noble traits of the ancestors of Shri Vallabhacharyaji in his poem on the birth of Shri Vallabha. The fore fathers of Shri Vallabha were well-known as the performers of great sacrifices like Somayaga etc.

Yagnanarayana Bhatt was a great scholar of Vedic lore. From Yagnanarayana Bhatt, the progenitor of the family down to Shri Laxmana Bhatt one hundred Somayaga sacrifices had been performed. Tradition has it that the family which performs a hundred Somayagas is blessed by God Himself. Shri Laxmana Bhatt had a firm conviction that God would incarnate in his family as a result of the completion of a hundred Soma sacrifices.

Shri Laxmana Bhatt was proficient in Shastras and a great devotee of God. He had married.

Illamagaru who was a sister of the Head of the Charity Department of the King of Vidyanagar. After the destruction of Kankarkumbh by Muslim invaders he migrated to Banāras with a view to settle there. He spent most of his time in the worship of Lord Krishna and the study of religious scriptures. Once he heard the news of the impending invasion of a Muslim Sardar on Banaras. There was widespread panic and consternation. Under the circumstances it was not possible to stay in Kashi peacefully. Besides, his wife was pregnant. He decided to leave Kashi for some safer place. Shri Laxmana Bhatt along with his wife and relatives started towards the south. When they arrived at Champaranya, Illamagaru was overcome with fatigue. Long and difficult journey told upon her health. She began to experience pain in the abdomen and she gave birth to a premature child. Considering the child to be still-born and dead, the mother enveloped the babe in the pieces of garments made of leaves and put it in the cavity of a Shami tree. Then they resumed their journey.

Having gone a little distance, the party rested on the bank of the river. Here the couple had a divine vision. They heard the voice of God



addressing them as follows.—“I have come to you in the form of a newly born child. The child will protect Hindu religion and culture.”—

Having heard this divine voice in a dream the parents immediately went back to the afore-said Shami Tree where, to their great joy and surprise, the child was sporting about in the midst of the encircling flames of fire ! No body was ever happier or more fortunate than the parents of the child: There was a halo of divine light round its face. Its eyes were radiating grace and nectar as it were ! It was smiling The wind was blowing gently The ferocious animals forgot their cruel nature in the presence of the deer and gazed at the child with steady eyes. The moon and the auspicious constellation appeared in the sky. The mother Illamagaru picked up the child and hugged it to her heart. This child later on came to be known as Shri Vallabhacharyaji. He was born on the eleventh day of the black half of Chaitra in Samvat 1529. According to another tradition his birth is considered to have taken place in samvat 1535.

## *Chapter II*

### *Early-Childhood.*

Shri Laxmana Bhatt selected Prayag as his

abode for future activities, though peace was restored in Kashi. As the child Vallabh grew up in age, he began to show signs of extraordinary and superhuman powers. He evinced no interest in toys and other child-like pastimes. He took delight in witnessing the divine sports of Shri Krishna as depicted in the Bhagavata. He looked intently at the pictures of lord Shri Krishna drawn on the walls of his neighbours, standing in the sun for hours together.

At the age of five he loudly proclaimed the divine names, 'Ramkrishna Mukund Madho'. He had a sweet and melodious voice. His face was symmetrical and radiant. His smile was catching. Many children came under the spell of his inspired songs and joined in his chanting of the names of God. Even grown-up people stood in speechless wonder to hear the chorus singing of these boys. Little Vallabh was so much lost in the contemplation of the divine sports of Shri Krishna that he fell into a trance and cried aloud while singing. The atmosphere was filled with divine love. The people wondered at the sight of this God-intoxicated child.

Here Shri Vallabh developed friendship with Shyamdas, a carpenter child. Shyamdas was

deeply attached to Shri Vallabh and he served him to the best of his ability. Shri Laxman Bhatt was noted among Pandits for his vast knowledge, saintly life and largeness of heart. Many scholars and learned persons flocked to his house and discussed metaphysical questions. Whenever the discussion presented a riddle which baffled solution, Shri Vallabh muttered the relevant verses from the Bhagavata which contained a clue to the problem under discussion. The Pandits were struck with the uncommon knowledge of Vallabh. Shri Vallabh was invested with the sacred thread in 1535. This event was celebrated with great joy.

### *CHAPTER III* *Study at Banaras.*

The Upanayana ceremony marked the beginning of a life of study and Brahmacharya. Shri Laxman Bhatt came to Banaras to educate Shri Vallabh in the traditional scriptures. Here he was placed under the care of a renowned pandit, Vidyavilas Bhattacharya. Shri Vallabh was a precocious child and he studied under him the Vedas, the Upanishads and the six systems of philosophy. Shri Vallabh was inclined to Bhakti from his very childhood. He saw the will of God



in everything that happened. He was not proud of his learning. He was destined to be a leader of a great religious movement; yet he was an humble servant of God.

Once a cow belonging to Shri Laxmana Bhatt fell ill. There was no hope of her recovery. Shri Laxman Bhatt and his wife became very unhappy and began to weep. Seeing his parents crying like ordinary ignorant beings, Shri Vallabh tried to assuage their grief in the following words: "In this world death is certain for all. Everybody has to die sooner or later. Fear of death should be got rid of. Whatever happens in this world is but the sport of God. You are both wise and firm believers in God. What to talk of ordinary people if you thus sink in sorrow ! Our cow is not going to die through the grace of God. But you should not get perturbed even if she dies. The mind should be kept undisturbed in happiness and misery".

With these words Shri Vallabh went to the cow and passed his lotus like hand over her body. And lo ! the cow showed signs of movement and standing up began to lick the hand of Shri Vallabh. All rejoiced at the cow being revived. The people began to talk of the miraculous powers of Vallabh.

Shri Vallabh was gifted with rare intellectual powers. His memory was prodigious. He studied various branches of knowledge. The study of Shri Bhagavata had a special appeal to his devotional heart; and he got mastery over it with a thorough insight into the true meaning and purport of it. He had a wonderful power of eloquence. His critical study of the scriptures made him arrive at the following conclusions :—  
 “The Mayavada of Shankaracharya is not consistent with the meaning of the Vedas. The world is not false, but it is real. Individual soul is a part of God. God is of the essence of joy.

He began to preach and propagate the religious and philosophical principles as embodied in the Gita and the Bhagavata. His superb eloquence, matchless reasoning, masterly study of the shastras and his unique style of presentation and persuasion made a powerful impression on the master minds of Banaras.

The Pandits began to call him ‘Bala Saraswati’ (an incarnation of Saraswati in the form of a little boy) and ‘Vakpati’ the master of speech. Being jealous of the rising fame of Vallabh some pandits began to harbour ill-will towards him and began to harass him in various

ways. When Laxman Bhatt came to know of this, he called back Shri Vallabh to him and sent him to the south to perfect his studies there.

Here he was put under the care of a great teacher. He taught Vallabh the various scriptures of the Shaiva and Vaishnava faith. Here also he became an object of love and admiration of all on account of his Guru-worship, devotion to God, humility and lovable nature. On completion of his study he begged his Guru to allow him to return. The Guru blessed him and told him to preach the gospel of love and Bhakti to the troubled humanity. He visited with his two brothers and father the famous shrine of Balaji and paid his respects to the Deity. Here he lost his father in Samvat 1544.

#### *Chapter IV* *His First All-India Tour*

The death of Shri Laxmana Bhatt came as a terrible shock to the family. The mother was deeply grieved at the unfortunate death of Bhattaji. Shri Vallabh consoled the bereaved mother by saying that God's will is supreme.

Now Shri Vallabh wanted to start on a mission of his life. He wanted to tour the land to make a first hand study of the socio-religious



conditions of India and the spiritual needs of the people. He requested his mother to bless him in his new Venture. Shri Vallabh was about sixteen years old at this time. Mother was familiar with the uncommon powers of her son. Moreover she thought that pilgrimage to various cultural centres of India would broaden his outlook and develop his personality. So she consented to the request of Vallabh.

Taking leave of his mother, Shri Vallabh started on his first tour in the company of a few disciples, chief among whom was Krishanadas Meghan. He first visited his birth place, Champaranya. In this dense forest, there was not a single well. Hence the passers-by and pilgrims had to undergo untold difficulties for want of water. Shri Vallabh got a well dug by his pupils and made a reading of Shrimad Bhagavata on its outskirts. The party resumed journey.

When they passed through Vardha, the son of a rich family renounced his wealth and became his disciple. His name was Damodardas who is ranked as the foremost follower among the eightyfour disciples of Vallabh. He later on exerted a powerful influence in shaping the history of the Sampradaya.

From Champaranya Shri Mahaprabhu (as Vallabha came to be addressed) went to Jagannath Puri. Here his discourses on Shri Bhagavata attracted large audiences in the temple of Puri. The people believed him to be Shukadevaji incarnate. His words went straight into the hearts of the people. The fame of Shri Vallabh went to the ears of the king of Puri. He was religious minded. He took interest in the promotion of religion.

Once a great difference of opinion arose between him and his court pandits as regards some religious point. So he convened a great assembly of scholars to know the real truth. Shri Vallabh was invited to the assembly. In spite of heated and prolonged discussions, no decision could be arrived at. But Shri Vallabh cut the Gordian knot and put an end to the controversy by giving his verdict in the following verse :—

एकं शास्त्रं देवकीपुत्रगीतमेको देवो देवकीपुत्र एव ।  
मन्त्रोप्येकस्तस्य नामानि यानि कर्माप्येकं तस्य देवस्य सेवा ॥

[ The only scripture is the Gita which is sung by the son of Devaki, the son of Devaki in the only supreme God. The only Mantra (the mystic word) is his names and the only Karma (activity) is the service unto that God ]

This judgment of Shri Vallabh won him the encomium of all present there. Many were converted to his point of view who became his disciples. Wherever Shri Vallabh went, the people flocked to him to listen to his ambrosial sermons and embraced his faith. During his pilgrimage, he visited Ujjain among many other places. His visits were marked by a new spirit of spiritual revival among the people. From Ujjain Shri Mahaprabhu came to Govardhan Hill in the Uttar Bharat. He put up at the residence of Sadu Pande, a great Bhakta of Krishna. This event took place on ninth of the black half of Vaishakh, Samvat 1545. Shri Nathji had manifested Himself on the Hill and Shri Vallabh went up the hill to see the Swarupa of Shri Nathji. He was face to face with the Image of Lord Krishna. The divine vision of God stirred the innermost springs of his heart. His heart could not contain the surging emotions of love and Bhakti. Tears streamed down the eyes of Shri Vallabh. He bowed down his head before the deity. His aspirations were fulfilled. He got the image removed from the hill and got it installed under the Khijada tree in a small temple. The service of this image of Shri Nathji was entrusted to Sadu Pande. The manifestation of Shri Nathji is meant for the salvation of all



the Jivas (souls) in this Kaliyuga. The poet of 'Chorashi Vaishnava Na Dhol' says the same thing.\*

Shri Vallabh had a great fascination for the land of Vraja, sanctified by the lotus feet of Lord Shri Krishna. The divine sports of Shri Krishna at Gokul and Vrindavan had a perennial appeal to his heart. When he meditated on the esoteric meaning of the Lila he fell into a trance and enjoyed communion with God. Thus it was that he became very fond of living in Vraja.

He first visited Vraja in samvat 1545 and spent the monsoon season there. He went on foot around all the places Lord Shri Krishna had sanctified by his divine sports.

He spent nearly two months in the land of Vraja, covering all the sacred spots hallowed by the memory of Lord Shri Krishna. He came to Gokul on Janmashtami and started the practice of celebrating the festival of the birth of lord Shri Krishna. In the same way he initiated the 'Annakuta' festival on Shri Giriraja Hill.

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\*“૭૧૪ તીથ જે ધરશે એમનાં ધ્યાન જે,  
ભવસાગરમાં તરવાને સિધ્ધાંત જે;  
તે માટે શ્રી મહાપ્રભુજીએ પ્રગટ કર્યો,  
કલિયુગ જીવને સુધારવા શ્રીનાથ જે”

Besides he started reciting the Bhagavata at convenient places in Vraja. In this way he delighted the hearts of the people of Vraja by inspiring in them love for God and glorifying the divine sports of Shri Krishna. Now he determined to spend the whole Chaturmasa in Vraja every year. From Vraja he went to Adel to meet his mother.

### *Chapter V* *The Writing of The Granthas.*

During his first tour Shri Vallabh had come in contact with people of different faiths and beliefs. He saw the latent seeds of Bhakti in the hearts of the people of Vraja but they were divested of Gnana (Knowledge) and Vairagya (dispassion). The people at large followed religious practices in a blind manner. The people had become selfish and hypocritical. There was moral degeneration every where. No body knew the real essence of religion. Some ascetics and Sadhus put too much stress on knowledge and called upon the people to renounce the world. While some others preached the mortification of the body by undergoing fasts and penances. The common people were at a loss to know the real way of Moksha (liberation). Only a few people

could follow the path of knowledge and Vairagya. Many persons of immature intellect, in a fit of passion, renounced their home etc and became mendicants and ascetics But they took to irreligious practices This was the condition of the people. Shri Vallabh has given a graphic picture of the society of his times in his Krishnashraya Grantha. He says, " The country is overrun by the Mlechchhas who in their fanatical zeal persecute the people. The holy places are inhabited by rogues and wicked persons. So called good persons have become egoistic "

Shri Vallabh felt the necessity of writing serviceable literature, expounding true religion to the people. He composed various dissertations based on the Vedas, the Gita the Brahmnsutras and the Bhagavata. He first of all composed the first chapter of ' Tattvadipa Nibandha ' in which he has evaluated the different Schools of thought and pointed out their drawbacks. He has shown in it the futility of Gnana and Vairagya which may be divorced from Bhakti. He does not approve of renouncing the world until a man is rooted and firmly fixed in the feeling of Vairagya. It is better for him to live at home and serve the lord.



Shri Vallabh bitterly criticises the doctrine of Mayavada which erroneously preaches the falsity of the world and the illusory character of Jiva. Shri Vallabh held that both Jiva and Jagat are evolved from Brahma and hence are real. All the individual souls are the parts of God. Hence the service of the needy, down trodden and forsaken souls is the service unto God. He who inflicts pain on living creatures indirectly pains the Lord. Hence no living being should be insulted or roughly treated. But we should desire the welfare of all, through the service of God. Service of God is the real penance.

All the members of the family should direct their efforts to the service of God. The home should be converted into a temple of the Supreme Being. Time should not be wasted in ordinary useless talk. We should suffer with patience the misery that befalls us. Human mind with all its limitations, cannot understand the secrets of life. Inscrutable are the ways of God. We should have firm faith in the goodness of God in whatever happens to us. Certain things, events or incidents are beyond our comprehension. But full conviction must grow in us that everything happens through the Will of God. This is, in

brief, the synopsis of the teachings of Shri Vallabhacharya.

Shri Vallabh took three years to complete his first tour. Then he stayed with his mother at Adel and devoted some years to the writing of philosophical works.

## CHAPTER VI

### *Second All India Tour.*

Shri Vallabha's second tour began in 1550, Samvat. It was his all-India pilgrimage, covering all the principal seats of learning and sacred places in Bharat. He disseminated the principles of **Bhagavata Dharma**.

To begin with, he went to Govardhan to have the **darshana** of Shri Nathji. Here he initiated a particular mode of worship. He appointed Shri Krishnadas Patel as the manager of the temple and entrusted the work of service and Kirtana to Shri Ramdas Chauhan and Kumbhandas.\*

A cow was absolutely needed for the daily service of Shri Nathji. But Shri Vallabh kept

\* 'શ્રીનાથજીને સેવાના ત્યાં કર્યા બહુય પ્રકાર ;

અતિસુખદરીતે જગતહિતને, કર્યો એ વિસ્તાર (૧૬૫)

— 'પ્રાકટ્ય સિદ્ધાંત'; માંગલ્ય ત્રીજી.

no belongings with him. He went about the world with only a dhoti and an upper garment. He was the glowing example of simplicity incarnate. He carried with him however, the Image of God. A little golden ring was decorating the finger of the idol Vallabh gave it to Damodardas to purchase a cow with. Damodardas bought two cows from the proceeds of the ring. When Sadu Pande and other disciples of Vallabh came to know of this, they offered in service many cows to lord Shri Nathji.

Shri Vallabh then, proceeded to Gokul and put up at Govind Ghat on the bank of the Jamuna. A big peepal tree still exists on this Ghat. During his first tour Shri Vallabh had come across people who were voluptuons, superstitious and fallen from the path of true religion. They took delight in fruitless argumentation and cold logical discussions. They were impure in thoughts and moral conduct. He deeply pondered over this deplorable state of things. The sad picture of the society came to his mind often and often. He was greatly troubled in his mind to notice the misery and ignorance of the people.\*

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\* श्री कृष्णेनानेक जीवोद्धारार्थमाज्ञप्तोहमेते जीवाः  
स्वभावतो दुष्टा धनाद्यासक्ता दुष्टपदार्थैर्व्यापृताः कथमेतेषां



## CHAPTER VII

### *The Behest of God*

The dark and dismal picture of the society of his times agitated his heart. Shree Vallabha-charyaji's kind heart could not tolerate all these things. He vigorously applied his mind to the problem of removing the wicked propensities of the ignorant Jivas. How could he make the Jivas pure and guileless? How could he turn them to the path of Bhakti? How could he remove the sorrows and miseries of mankind? These thoughts preoccupied his mind. He wanted to give to mankind a message of hope, love and service to God.

This feeling of uneasiness reached its climax on the eleventh day of the bright half of Shravana. Tears rolled down his eyes. It is said that God appeared before Shri Vallabha and gave him the mantra (Mystic formula) of Brahma-Sam-bandha and instructed him to initiate the jivas in the grace of God by giving them this Mantra.

The gist of this Sharana Mantra is as follows:-

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दोषनिवृत्तिरुद्धारश्च भविष्यतीति चिन्ताकुलान् श्रीवल्लभाचार्यान्  
विदित्वा भगवान् एकान्तसमये चिन्तानिवर्तकमुपायमुक्तवान् ।

The Commentary of Shri Kalyanaráy on ' **Siddha-  
nta Rahasya**

"God is the real owner of all the things in this world. Things which I consider my own do not really belong to me. The Jivas are unhappy because the element of joy has disappeared from them. Therefore I surrender to God whatever I possess. Oh ! Krishna ! I am thy servant". Those who take this pledge automatically become the humble servants of God. This spiritual initiation is a great turning point in the life of a devotee. Distinctions of high and low have no place among the initiated souls, because all are servants of the same God. The Bhaktas will feel joy and happiness in the service of mankind because every thing belongs to God."

Vallabha's sorrow vanished. His joy knew no bounds. He contemplated on the divine form of the Lord and offered him a saffron-coloured garland consisting of 360 threads. God then disappeared ! Shri Vallabha could not bear the pangs of separation. In this love-lorn condition Shri Mahaprabhu began to describe the sweet and enchanting form of Lord Shri Krishna. \*

Thus Shri Vallabha sincerely felt that he was commissioned by God to spread the cult of Bhakti.

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\* अधरं मधुरं वदनं मधुरं नमनं मधुरं हसितं मधुरम् ।  
हृदयं मधुरं गमनं मधुरं, मधुराधिपते रखिलं मधुरम् ॥

He went from place to place, delivering this message of God.

Shri Vallabha with his devoted band of followers went to Bahulavana. The Muslim Suba of that place was harassing the Hindu population. He had forbidden the worship of the image of the cow. Here he performed a miracle. The inanimate cow was transformed into a living animal! The Hakem surrendered himself to Shri Mahaprabhu and lifted ban on the worship of the cow.

In the land of Vraja, the land associated with the divine childhood of Shri Krishna, Shri Vallabh experienced the strong feeling of separation from Krishna. The sacred places like Gokula, Govardhan and Vrindavana recalled the memories of the divine sports of Krishna, and Vallabha feeling reminiscent of these, lost often his consciousness as he had identified himself with body and soul with Krishna.

After having moved over the different sacred places in Vraja, Shri Vallabha came to Gahvar Van. Here he saw a big serpent being stung on all sides by innumerable ants. A great change suddenly came over the face of Vallabha. All his joy and exultation of spirit

passed away. He was plunged in deep sorrow. His disciples were at a loss to understand the real cause of this unexpected change in spirits. They suspected some wrong act on their own part. The disciples became greatly worried over this. Gathering up courage however, Shri Damodardas requested Shri Vallabha to tell them the cause of his grief. Hearing the words of Damodardas, he, with tears in his eyes, pointed to the serpent being eaten up by the ants. The Cobra was hissing and dashing against the ground.

Shri Vallabha explained the whole phenomenon, as follows:—Look here; this serpent was a great religious head in its former birth. The ants which are devouring its body were his disciples. He had amassed a great fortune from his votaries. Instead of spending it in the service of God or in meritorious deeds, he squandered it in reckless extravagance. His disciples, following in the footsteps of their Guru, began to lead the life of sensual pleasures. In due course of time the Mahant and his disciples left this mortal world. The Mahant was reborn as the serpent and his disciples became the ants in the next birth.

To the Guru the disciples said “why did



you spoil our lives if you had no power to make us free from the bonds of Samsara ? Why did you accept our wealth ? ”

These ants are retaliating with a vengeance. Therefore he who aspires to be a Guru should possess the necessary requisites. If an aspirant to devotion fails to find out a Guru worthy of the name, he should rather stay at home and engage himself in the service of God and the reading of the Bhagavata. He will, in this way, realise God.

Thus saying Shri Vallabha took pity on the Serpent and sprinkled water on it from his holy bowl. The Cobra and the ants were released from their present wretched birth.

Having finished the round of Vraja, Shri Vallabha came over to Gujarat. Visiting Siddhapur and other places he came to Bahucharaji. Here the Vama Margis held their sway and indulged in hideous practices in the name of religion. They extolled the use of meat and wine in the name of Goddess Kali. Shri Mahaprabhuji was greatly pained at this. He persuasively reasoned with the misguided followers of Mother Goddess as follows :—

“It is very bad to indulge in Shastric discussions without proper study of the scriptures. We

are Hindus and liquor drinking has been considered as one of the heinous sins by Manu in his 'Mausmritya'. It is your duty as Hindus to desist from such sinful acts."

Kali is the mother of the universe. And all the creatures are her children. How can the mother be propitiated by the flesh of her children? Hence it is your duty to give up sinful practices like these and worship the Goddess sincerely."

Then Shri Vallabha came to Dwarka. Here he paid his respects to Lord Krishna. Thence he and his party went to Sindh. At that time Sindh was inhabited by Mlechchha people. People lacked in moral and religious fervour. They did not observe the rules of religious conduct. Even in outward appearance the people looked like Mlechchhas. Most of the people had lost their faith in Hinduism, their ancestral religion.

The chief mission of the birth of Shri Vallabhacharya was to uplift women and Shudras. Among the one hundred and eight names of Shri Mahaprabhuji, Shri Harirajji enumerates the following :—

सर्वोद्धारकाय नमः । पतितसंग्रहणाय नमः । अशरण-  
शरणाय नमः । स्त्रीशुद्धादिहितकर्त्रे नमः । पतिततारकाय नमः ।

Here there were two great military-officers. One was Magadh Baudha and the other a Muslim. Both were intimate friends. Once while they were discussing some religious matter, they came to such a point that the controversy assumed a serious turn. Baudh officer believed that non-violence was the highest religion, while his Muslim friend advocated violence. Both were in search of a great judge who could give his decision in the matter with authority and conviction. At that time they chanced to see Shri Vallabhacharya. Both of them were greatly impressed with high spirituality and wisdom of Shri Vallabha and they requested him to be an arbitrator between them.

Shri Vallabha listened to their arguments peacefully. Then he exposed the hollowness of the arguments advanced in favour of violence, and gave a learned discourse on the meaning of violence and non-violence. He further explained that those who take pleasure in the welfare of all living beings know the essence of Godhead. The Muslim general was deeply impressed by the sermon of Vallabha and he accepted him as his Guru.

Shri Vallabha was an incarnation of Divine Love. Men of God see no distinctions of caste

or sex in the sphere of Bhakti. True excellence of man consists in Bhakti alone. This new convert to the faith of Vallabha was renamed as Aryakhan who began to lead the life of a true Vaishnava.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *Acclaimed as a World Teacher.*

Returning from Sindh, Shri Vallabha wended his way to the south, the land of his ancestors.

While on travel, he halted at Mandar Madhusudan. When Vallabha was reciting the Bhagavat, a young one of a deer, shivering with fear from a lion, hurriedly hid itself in his lap. Shri Vallabha took pity on it and kindly patted it. He put his thumb into its mouth, thereby putting wonderful power in it. Thus the fawn was rendered safe from the attack of the lion.

Shri Vallabha visited Agrahar, his native place and then came to Vidyanagar, which was a great centre of learning in the South.

It was famous for its splendour and wealth. King Krishnadeva ruled over the kingdom. The King was a great patron of art. He was



brave, religious and noble hearted. He had a leaning towards Shaivism, while the queen was inclined towards Madhva Vaishnavism. Both the king and the queen were greatly devoted to each other; but they widely differed in their religious beliefs

In deference to the wishes of the Queen, the king held a great religious convention to which all the religious heads, the pandits, savants and saints were invited. The assembly divided itself into two groups the Shaivas and the Vaishnavas. The followers of Shaivism contended that God was attributeless, while the followers of Vaishnava sects maintained that God was full of divine attributes. In the bitter controversy that ensued the Vaishnavas seemed to have lost the ground.

At this very critical juncture Shri Vallabha arrived on the scene. His accidental arrival in Vidyanagar was a God-send to the Vaishnavas. Shri Vallabha was specially invited by the king to continue the thread of the debate. This occasion afforded him an excellent opportunity to proclaim before the learned audience his views on Vedic Religion and Bhakti Marga. Shri Vallabha took up cudgels on behalf of the Vaishnava school of thought and carried on discussions with the Acharyas

of Shaivism. Shri Vallabha explained the secret of Hinduism as follows :-

"Hindu religion considers Lord Krishna to be the Highest Deity. This Supreme Being is not inanimate or feelingless. But it is of the nature of consciousness and bliss. He is all pervading. The individual souls are the parts of Brahman. God is the creator of this jagat, and hence this world is true. If the world is unreal, the all powerful nature of God is contradicted. Therefore giving up frivolous arguments, resign your selves to the service of God. Take delight in the welfare of all living creatures. Get rid of worldly attachments. Be contented with what you get and have, and direct your mind and senses in the service of God. Accept the cult of service to God. ~~That~~ will lead to the realization of God. Real devotees see the divine Lilas of God. The Lilas of God are eternal. Hence God is full of divine qualities--"

Shri Vallabha took twenty eight days to explain the principles of Brahmaveda which is based on the authority of Shruti. According to Shri Vallabhacharya every letter of the Veda is valid. He is opposed to the forced interpretation of the Veda. It is a crime to distort the meaning

of the Veda to suit one's own point of view. The knowledge of the Vedas is revealed to those who are in the grace of God. Lord Shri Krishna has bequeathed to us the 'Gita' containing the essence of the Vedas, Upnishadas and the Brahma Sutras Shri Bhagavata is an elaboration of the 'Gita'. Hence Bhagavat Gita is the sacred scripture of Hinduism.

His natural interpretation of the Vedic-passages, his incontrovertible arguments, his wonderful hold on the various shastras turned the scales in favour of Vaishnavism.

The opponents could not hold their own against the powerful logic of Sri Vallabhacharya. Shankarites were discomfited in the contest in the end. The representatives of the diverse faiths and sects were mightily pleased with his arguments and comprehensive knowledge.

He was acclaimed as the undisputed conqueror in the debate. The King arranged a religious ceremony called the Kanakabhisheka in which he was weighed against gold. All the Acharyas, learned men, thinkers, statesmen and citizens were present at the ceremony. Highest honours were conferred upon him at that time. \*

\* એસાડી આસને, અતિ કીધું તે તહાં સન્માન  
હૃદ સોલ સહસ્ર કનકને, કરાવ્યું તે સ્નાન.

The King offered all the gold used in the ceremony. But Shri Vallabha was indifferent to worldly riches. Accordingly he did not accept the gold coins, but he expressed his desire to distribute it among the Brahmins and the poor people. He accepted only seven coins which he used in making the anklets for the idol of Shri Nathaji. Here the King and many people turned into his disciples.

From Vidyanagar he proceeded to Thaneswar. Many disciples of Vallabha lived here. Once pandit named Ramanand Mishra had also become his disciple. Shri Vallabha had great love for him. Whenever he came to his town, he stayed at his place. Once Shri Mahaprabhu after reading some portion from the Bhagavata went to sleep.

In the early hours of the morning pandit Ramanand got up and asked his wife to collect the cow-dung, otherwise the Vaishnavas would take it away. Shri Mahaprabhu heard the words of the Pandit. He was taken aback at the selfish thoughts of his disciple! It was strange that

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સ્નાનોદ્ધક તે ત્યમજ મેલી, ત્યાં થકી કયું પ્રયાણ

ધર્મ સ્થાપ્યો જગતમાં, જશ વાણ્યો નિશાણ

૧૮૭

(પ્રાકટ્ય ચિહ્નિત)



Ramananda was still ignorant of the greatness of the Vaishnavas. He should not have entertained such narrow ideas in his mind. Shri Ramanand had fallen from the grace of God. He had not truly understood the secret of self-surrender. Why should he worry for the dung which was to be used in the service of God?

Shri Mahaprabhu left his place immediately. All the Vaishnavas beseeched him to be kind to them. But he did not pay heed to their words. How can he stay in the house in which the very spirit of Bhakti was violated? Shri Ramanand repented for his sin. During his third tour Shri Vallabha forgave his faults and accepted him as his disciple.

## CHAPTER X

### *Marriage*

In Benaras there lived a pious Brahmin. He had a beautiful daughter named Mahalaxmi. He approached the mother of Vallabha and proposed to offer his daughter in marriage to Shri Vallabha. Shri Mahaprabhu was commanded by God to enter the life of a Grihashtha. Knowing the will of God, the mother accepted the proposal. The marriage was celebrated solemnly in the presence of

large gathering of his relatives and disciples.

Shree Vallabha's prime mission was to propagate the sublime ideals of Pushtimarga and to initiate the deserving souls into the mystery of God's grace,

Once he was standing on the bank of the sacred Ganges. When he came out of the river after his ablutions when his favourite disciple Shri Krishnadas Meghan asked him, "What happens to a person who commits suicide in the water of the holy Ganges?"

Shri Vallabha replied: "The Ganges has come out of the Lotus feet of Lord Vishnu. Her mere touch sanctifies the fallen souls. Saints become the worshippers of Krishna. Those who end their lives in the Ganges go to Hell and remain there for seven successive births. The Ganges does not accept such persons. No person should get dispirited of his life under any circumstances."

No sooner did he utter these words than a man running up to him fell at his feet. This unhappy man was on the point of committing suicide. Anxiety was writ large on his face. His eyes were pale and laden with misery. He seemed to have become desperate on account of unbearable sorrow. Shri Mahaprabhu raised him

up and asked him to tell his story.

The man said, "O My Lord, had I not heard your wise words, I would have plunged myself into the waters of the river. Your words came as a soothing balm to my troubled mind. You have transformed my life, as it were. I was defeated by the pandits of Kashi in a religious assembly. I had won many debates, silencing my opponents. But it was for the first time that I was defeated in the contest. Overtaken with despair and sense of shame. I thought it fit to end my life. But your prophetic words have changed the course of my life. Be pleased to accept me as your disciple."

Shri Vallabha touched with pity, gave him NamaNivedan Mantra and made him his disciple. At the time of initiation Shri Vallabha explained to him the meaning of Pushti, i.e. the grace of God. Pushtimarga is the path seeking the grace of the Lord. No amount of individual effort or Sadhana is considered of any avail in the Marga. -Vedic rites and Social practices have secondary importance in this Bhakti-Marga. Devotees of God only think of His happiness and lovingly serve Him. They do everything in order to please him. They never waste their time in shastric dis-

cussions. Therefore the seeker after truth should give up useless activities and turn his mind inward to realise God within his heart."

The name of this disheartened soul was Rana Vyasa. His drooping spirit got new strength. The message of Vallabha brought about a miraculous change in his heart. A great scholar, puffed up with pride was turned into an humble servant of God. Ever since that time Rana Vyas spent his time in chanting the divine names and reading the Subodhini a commentary on the Bhagavata.

## CHAPTER X

### *Pandits of Kashi silenced*

Once Shri Mahaprabhuji was camping at Charanat. The place was full of natural scenery. There was calm and peace everywhere-Its tranquil and serene atmosphere was conducive to a life of service and contemplation. Shri Vallabha had established his reputation as an eminent Acharya of his time; and hundreds of pandits from far off places came to him to understand his philosophical doctrines. All his time was tak-



en up in dispelling their doubts. This came in the way of the regular service of God.

Shri Vallabha felt the necessity of writing down his definite views re: different schools of thought in the form of a systematic treatise. He accordingly composed a booklet called 'Patravallambana' which was intended to serve as a compendium to his philosophy of pure Monism. The various pages of this treatise were hung on the portals of the Kashi Vishwanath Temple. It was an open challenge to Mayavada and other schools of thought. He silenced once for all the protagonists of Shankara philosophy.

Shri Vallabh thence went to Adel to stay there. He put up a temporary hut there for his residence. Here Shri Gopinathji was born on the tenth of the dark half of Asvin Samvat 1570. At this residence he composed also his famous commentary on Vedanta Sutrās of Badarayana, called 'Anubhashya'.

## CHAPTER XI

### *Meeting of Suradas.*

Once Shri Mahaprabhuji was going to Vraja. On the way he met the famous poet Surdas who

lived at Gaughat near Agra. Listening to' his lyrical poems on the Lilas of God, the people became mad after him. Surdas hailed from a well-to do family. But on account of some conflict with the Moghul Emperor he lost his all.

Many became the disciples of Suradas on hearing his soul-stirring songs. Therefore he was called 'Suraswami'. This poet saint happened to meet Shri Vallabh. Surdas was greatly impressed by the divine personality of Vallabha and he became his humble disciple.

Thus the brightest luminary of Hindi literature sang the glory of Lord Shri Krishna in his innumerable lyrics. At the touch of the master, the poet Surdas became a world famous poet.\*

Surdas selected Govardhan Hill for his abode. He spent his whole life in the service and devotion of Lord Krishna. His Pandas (hymns) deal with the narration of the divine sports of Shri Bala Krishna described in the tenth book of the Bhagavata. His poems breathe the spirit of intense longing of a devout heart for communion with God.

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\*“કરમયોગ પુનિ જ્ઞાન ઉપાસન, સમઢી બ્રમ ભરમાયો,  
શ્રી વલ્લભ ગુરુ તત્ત્વ સુનાયો, લીલાભેદ અતાયો,  
તા દિનતે કૃતિલીલા ગાઈ, એક બક્ષ પદ્યન્ધ”

From Vraja Shri Mahaprabhu went to Adel. Shri Vallabh had great fascination for this place on account of its natural beauty and calm atmosphere. The ruler of the place had great respect for him and made his stay as comfortable as possible. Here Shri Vitthalnathji, the second son of Shri Vallabh was born. He was the worthy son of a worthy father. Pushtimarga flourished under him in full form.

Shri Paramananddas was another disciple of Vallabh. He was gifted with the poetic talent of a high order. His songs were listened to with rapt attention by Shri Vallabh. On hearing his songs, Vallabh experienced the thrill of 'ecstatic joy

Once Shri Mahaprabhu along with Damodardas, Krishnadas and Parmananddas started for Vraja. Shri Vallabha was pining for the sight of Vraja. On the way he asked Shri Parmananddas to sing the glory of God. The poet seeing that Shri Mahaprabhuji was wistfully longing for Vraja, sang the song appropriate to the sentiment generated in the heart of the Master \*

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\* હરિ તેરી લીલાડી શુદ્ધિ આવે,  
કમલનેન મનમોહિની મૂરતિ, મન મન ચિત્ર મનાવે (૧)

Hearing this song, Shri Vallabh fell into a trance. He became fully absorbed in the Lilas of Lord Krishna—Damodardas and other devotees were taken aback Shri Parmananddas became sad and sorrowful. After three days Shri Vallabh regained his consciousness

Shri Vallabh was thus an apostle of love. He was God-intoxicated. There are many such episodes in the life of Shri Vallabh.

## CHAPTER XI

### *Disappearance*

It was the third day of the bright half of Ashadh, samvat 1587. Shri Vallabh was living on the Hanuman Ghat at Kashi. Observing fast and withdrawing himself from the outer world, he was engrossed in the contemplation of God.

Shri Vallabha, it appeared, had received a higher call to leave this world—Shri Vallabha was

- બારક લલિત જય માયા કરિ, સો કૈસે વિસરાવે;  
 મુખ મુસિકાન બંક અવલોકનિ, ચાલ મનોહર ભાવે. (૨)
- કમલક નિમિત્ત તિમિર આલિંગન, કમલક પિકે સુર ગાવે,  
 કમલક સંભ્રમ 'કવાસિ કવાસિ' કહિ સંગહીન હી ધાવે. (૩)
- કમલક નેન મૂડી અંતરગત, મનિ-માલા પહિરાવે,  
 પરમાનંદ પ્રભુ સ્યામ ધ્યાન કરિ, ઐસે વિરહ જગાવે. (૪)



busy with writing his commentary on Shri Mad-Bhagavata. But he received the call of God thrice. He left the work of 'Subodhini' unfinished, and took Sannyasa (Renunciation) as ordained by the shastras.

It was the seventh day of his fast and vow of silence. Thousands of people had collected at Hanuman Ghat to receive his last blessings. Both his sons, Sri Gopinath and Sri Vitthalnath were present. Shri Vitthalnathji requested him to give his parting message. But as Shri Vallbh was observing the vow of silence, he wrote three and a half verses on the ground. His memorable words read as follows:- "Always keep yourselves aloof from worldly attachments. Directing your senses Godwards worship Shri Krishna, the Lord of the Gopis, with all your heart. Lord Shri Krishna is not of this world. He does not believe in service without love."

At this time a voice from the sky was heard saying "If you have firm faith in me, you will flourish and will not come to grief." With these words Shri Mahaprabhuji stood up. His body had become emaciated on account of the prolonged fasts. However there was divine lustre on his face. He was incessantly uttering the names of

God. He had worn only one piece of garment covering his waist.

He walked slowly to the Ganges and bowed to her. He entered the holy waters and suddenly disappeared into the lap of Mother Ganges. A great column of dazzling light appeared in the Sky.

Hundred of his disciples wept bitterly and some having been unable to bear the pangs of separation, followed their Master quitting this mortal world. !

## CHAPTER XII

### *Under the banner of Pushtimarga.*

Shri Mahaprabhuji has composed a number of works, all in Sanskrit. Anubhashya, Nibandha, Subodhiniji and Shodasha Granthas are chief among them.

Shri Mahaprabhuji had a number of disciples including Kings, poets, Shudras and people from the low castes, even Mahomedans.

Among the poets the following names are noteworthy:—Surdasji, Parmanandadas, Krishнадas, Kumbhandas, Gopaldas, Gopaldas of Itola, Kaviraj Bhat, Bhagwandas, Vishnudas Chhipa,

Gopaldas of Kashi, Padmanabhadas, the son of Sheth Purshottamdas, Junior Purshottamdas, Mukundadas and Alikhan Pathan.

The Shudras and Atishudras who formed the lowest rung of the Hindu Society came to occupy a position of honour under the auspices of Pustimarga. Under the influence of Shri Mahaprabhu they had become the ideal devotees of God. Krishnadas Adhikari was a Patel by caste, but he was given the rare privilege of worshipping and rendering service to the shrine of Shri Nathji. Yadvendradas Potter, Vishnudas Chhipa, Shyamdas Carpenter, Kumbhandas Gorava, Khetu, Deepo, Rupo and Toto—all belonging to the Shudra-class—were his disciples \*

Caste is not the criterion of an eligibility to this Marga. Vaishnavas of this faith form a hierarchy of their own in which spiritual equality of all is recognised, notwithstanding their caste distinctions.

Shri Vallabhacharyaji was one of those Acharya who welcomed the Yavanas into their fold.

\* ખેતુ, રૂપો, દીપો, તોતો કાંઈક જાતે ચાર;

પ્રીત પૂર્વકે રહે પરસ્પર ભાગ્યનો નહિ પાર.

(પ્રાકટ્ય સિદ્ધાંત, ભોગસ્વ ચાલુ પૃષ્ઠ ૧૭)

Alikhan Pathan, the Governor of Mahavan and Aryakhan of Sindh were the disciples of Shri Vallabhacharyaji. Moghul Emperor Humayun was greatly impressed by the towering personality of Shri Mahaprabhu, and his Queen Hamidabegam had given in gift to Vallabha, certain villages in Vraja which are still in possession of his descendants. This shows the extent of respect and veneration in which Shri Vallabhacharya was held by the emperor Humayun

Sikandar Lodi, who was cruel and fanatic was profoundly impressed by the teachings of Shri Vallabhacharyaji. He held so much respect for Acharya Vallabha that he got Vallabha's portrait prepared by his court painter Honhar.

\* The original drawing of Shri Vallabha is now in the possession of the King of Kisangadh.

Mohamad Begado, the Sultan of Gujarat had forbidden the public celebration of Hindu festivals and the taking out of religious processions etc. Shri Vallabha was taken out in procession wending its way through the thoroughfares of the capital. But the King was struck with the extraordinary power of Shri Vallabha and he allowed the procession to pass under his



gallery.

One Rustam Ali, the Collector of Muttra was a terror to the Hindu population. He had hit upon a novel plan of persecuting the Hindus. He had put up a mechanical device at the bathing ghat of the Yamuna. Those who passed under that machine had his tuft of hair chopped off! Shri Vallabha could not brook this insult to the Hindu religion. And he decided to remove this grievance. Shri Vallabha together with Keshava Bhutt Kashmiri and other disciples deliberately passed through the place where the machine was installed. But lo! the machine could not operate on them. This miracle brought the Suba to his senses. He was compelled to remove the machine forthwith from that place.

## CHAPTER XIII

### *A Retrospect.*

Shri Mahaprabhuji, has brought under the banner of Pushtimarga, Shudras, Ati Shudras, the outcaste and the Yavanas. Some of his followers were those who were guilty of trespassing the social laws and customs viz. widow remarriage, inter-caste marriage etc. He has stopped wherever possible, the dinners given after the dead,

animal sacrifices, the use of animal flesh, liquor drinking and other evil practices.

Wherever he heard of the ill-treatment of women, he exercised his influence to stop it. Shri Vallabhacharyaji was not a social reformer. Social reform was an offshoot of his religious mission. His chief aim was the propagation of the cult of Krishna Bhakti.

His residence at Adel was frequently visited by the famous Acharys, the saints and scholars of his time.

The then Shankaracharya Madhusudan Saraswati, Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Keshava Bhatt Kashmiri, the famous poet-saint Surdas and a host of celebrities of his time came to visit Shri Vallabhacharya.

Shri Vallabha hated pomp and show. He liked solitude and peace. All his Bethakas (halting places) are situated in secluded places in midst of natural surroundings. He selected for his temporary stay during his journey only those places which were conducive to the growth of spiritual life.

He made all his followers give up lust for money. He himself never touched money belonging to other persons. He was a true democrat

in spirit and he started the practice of getting the Vaishnavas initiated into the fold of Pushtimarga by his worthy followers. This was done with a view to carrying the message of 'Pushtimarga to the farthest corners of the land.

Shet Purushottamdas of Kashi, Gopaldas of Naroda, Pandit Ramanand of Thaneshwar and a few others were fortunate to get this unique privilege of initiation. This shows the cosmopolitan nature of Pushtimarga in the beginning of its inception.

His three tours of Bharat were undertaken to propagate the cult of Krishna Bhakti. There is no other religion higher than the chanting of the divine name of Lord Krishna. According to Vallabha, Lord Krishna is the highest Divinity. He tried to wean away people from the worship of minor gods and goddesses who are the partial manifestation of Brahman. He preached absolute surrender to Lord Krishna. A Pushtimargiya devotee is enjoined to cultivate divine qualities like Truth, Fearlessness and purity of the self.

Shri Vallabhacharyaji was a prophet of love. He came to this world so that people might walk on the path of God.

Love of God is the highest idea of humanity—He showed us the simple way of life—a life transfigured by pure love and service to Shri Krishna. Love of God must find expression in our daily life—It must come from the depth of our heart.

Shri Vallabha preached the principles of Bhagavata Dharma—the only religion of mankind. Our thousand bows to him!

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## BLESSINGS OF AN EXPONENT OF ŚRĪ VALLABHACHARYA'S PHILOSOPHY



My sincere goodwishes are with the Vallabha Publications, Baroda who have taken up an ambitious project to publish a series of English books on the Puṣṭimarga sect of Vaishnavism and the Suddhadvaita philosophy.

These publications when available will serve a great cause among English reading public.

May the blessings of Mahaprabhu Śrī Vallabhacharya be bestowed on the management of the organization to enable them to do this type of service to the world.

Goswami Sri Indira Betiji





**GOSWAMI SHYAM MANOHAR LALJI**

(Born: 26th June, 1940)

(Son of GOSWAMI Dikshitji Maharaj)

Seat: Kishangarh, Rajasthan

It gives me immense pleasure to know that Shri Vallabha Publications, Baroda is bringing out a series of English works on the Puṣṭimarga and Suddhadvaita philosophy, written by competent authors.

I am confident that this venture will not only inspire interest, in the study of Śrī Vallabhacharya's life and teachings among scholars in India and abroad, but also help humanity, now-a-days so much restless and disturbed to attain happiness and peace, because Vallabhacharya taught, surrender, love and peace. I wish the organization all success.

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